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THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS,
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Miss Mary E. Tracy, Jr.
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A BACKWARD, HARASSING SEASON

It is a backward season over much of the corn and cotton territory. Planting of those crops is from a week to ten days late, the condition being about like two years ago. The western Cotton Belt has had heavy rains; the central States have suffered from storms and unseasonable cold waves, while much spring wheat territory has been unduly dry. There is ample time yet for the main crops to catch up in normal growth but early planted crops have suffered, pastures are poor, and farm operations are already under a handicap that will be felt well into the season. A late spring is exceedingly harassing to farmers.

Winter wheat appears to be in favorable condition, on the whole. Fairly good progress was made in planting spring wheat but growth has been slow for lack of rain. Cotton planting is behindhand and in the early Gulf sections much replanting had to be done. The general sentiment among cotton men appears to be that a crop as large as last year would, in the face of existing stocks and apparent mill conditions, mean less profitable conditions for cotton producers. Potato growers, on the other hand, undoubtedly favor some increase in acreage but the bugaboo is the possibility that it will be badly overdone. Potato planting is getting under way in the late crop States, but with no clear indication yet as to the acreage.

The probability now is that corn acreage will be no larger than last year if as large. Small grains are behind schedule. Meadows have a poor start. It would seem that the probable volume of feedstuffs might be relatively less excessive this year than it was last. The tendency among hog producers is clearly to increase their stock. Eastern dairy cattle have moved up in price, with a probability of heavier feeding next fall. Consideration of the whole feed grain situation emphasizes the suggestion that current prices of certain feeds are at a relatively low level now.

In the larger field of price relationships, one item stands out. The index of purchasing power of farm products, in terms of non-agricultural commodities, has stood at 87 for six consecutive months, the five pre-war years being considered as 100. That ratio has held with the general price level falling. Apparently the agricultural production of 1925 - about as well balanced an output as can ever be expected - has served to bring farmers a stability in price relationships but not a parity with other groups. It is significant to note this Department's recent estimate that the net movement of population away from the farms last year was 901,000 as compared with 679,000 during 1924.

KEY REGIONS AT A GLANCE

THE EAST - Season two weeks late. Plowing and soil preparation in progress, with early grain and potatoes planted in favored sections. Prices of dairy cows materially higher, reflecting the somewhat stronger milk prices, fewer young stock, and possibly losses from anti-tuberculosis campaign. Fruit outlook considered reasonably good.

THE SOUTH - Season probably two weeks late. Suffered last month from heavy rains in west and severe cold waves and rain in east. Cotton planting going forward but has made slow progress, with stands and growth mostly unsatisfactory. Some damage to truck and fruit from cold and storms. Planting of corn, rice and other field crops well along; germination poor, much replanting.

CORN BELT - Season a week to ten days late. Early grains coming up but have made slow start. Corn planting under way but fitting of land has been handicapped by bad weather. Pastures and meadows made very slow start. Condition of winter grain only fair, late seeded mostly poor. Probability of slight decrease in corn acreage. Sentiment apparently all in favor of more hogs.

WHEAT BELT - Northern half of Belt suffered from lack of rain. Good progress made in seeding spring wheat but germination and growth have been slow because of dryness. Winter wheat condition good, though has been in need of rain from northern Kansas northward. Pastures and meadows backward.

RANGE COUNTRY - Hurt in sections by severe late storms. Range generally opened up well, however, and stock worked out on summer ranges. Sheep shearing well forward. Many feeders lost money on sheep this season and there is little present enthusiasm over either sheep or cattle feeding. Sugar beets and other irrigated crops mostly planted with prospects considered good.

PACIFIC COAST - Spring season mild and early with farm work well forward. Lack of rain in parts of north. Winter wheat heading. Spring crops generally growing well. Fruit coming rapidly; some damage to prunes from thrips and dropping. Picking Valencia oranges in south.

CATTLE ON FEED, APRIL 1

Following show the estimated number of cattle on feed in the Corn Belt, April 1, 1926, expressed as a percentage of last year:

Ohio	105%	Wisconsin	105%	South Dakota	80%
Indiana	105	Minnesota	105	Nebraska	95
Illinois	110	Iowa	100	Kansas	95
Michigan	95	Missouri	110	All 11 States	100.4

It will be seen that there was practically the same number of cattle on feed last month as a year ago.

Reports from feeders bear out market opinion that the weakness of the fat cattle market during the last two months has been discouraging to feeders in spite of the low price of corn. The narrow margin between feeding cattle and fat cattle prices has also tended to discourage feeding.

Feeders' reported intentions concerning months of marketing show a much larger percentage for April and May than did last year's reports.

Shipments of feeder cattle into the Corn Belt States during January, February, and March, this year, were about the same as during the same months last year. During January and February the percentage of heavy feeders, over 1,000 pounds, was somewhat larger this year than last, as was also the percentage of feeding cows and heifers; other weights of steers, especially the lighter ones, and calves showed considerable decreases. Any market improvement in fat cattle prices during the next three months may be expected to increase feeding above present indications in States where large surplus supplies of corn are reported.

AVERAGE PRICES OF FARM PRODUCTS RECEIVED BY PRODUCERS

April 15, 1926.

Actual prices received by producers at local farm markets as reported to the Division of Crop and Livestock Estimates of this Bureau. Average of reports covering the United States, weighted according to relative importance of district and State.

	5-yr. Av. Aug. 1909- July, 1914	April Average 1910-1914	Apr. 1925	Mar. 1926	Apr. 1926
Cotton, per lb.	¢ 12.4	12.4	23.7	16.5	16.6
Corn, per bu.	¢ 64.2	63.4	103.8	66.6	65.7
Wheat, per bu.	¢ 88.4	89.3	140.5	146.0	142.2
Hay, per ton	\$ 11.87	12.16	12.48	12.97	12.78
Potatoes, per bu.	¢ 69.7	68.8	70.5	225.6	270.5
Oats, per bu.	¢ 39.9	40.9	44.7	38.8	39.4
Beef cattle, per 100 lbs.	\$ 5.22	5.50	6.55	6.65	6.66
Hogs, per 100 lbs.	\$ 7.23	7.59	11.64	11.65	11.49
Eggs, per dozen	¢ 21.5	16.8	24.2	24.1	24.8
Butter, per lb.	¢ 25.5	25.1	39.7	41.7	41.1
Butterfat, per lb.	¢ ----	----	40.5	42.9	40.4
Wool, per lb.	¢ 17.7	18.0	40.8	34.7	33.2
Veal calves, per 100 lbs.	\$ 6.75	6.76	8.80	9.75	9.45
Lambs, per 100 lbs.	\$ 5.91	6.46	12.22	11.56	11.32
Horses	\$142.00	146.00	83.00	82.00	84.00

The farm price of potatoes increased from \$2.25 to \$2.70 per bushel from March 15 to April 15 of this year. Oats, flaxseed, cottonseed, milk cows, horses, chickens and eggs made small price gains. The increase in egg prices was rather unusual at this season of the year. Farm prices of other farm products showed little change or continued to decline in price.

Although wheat prices have continued to decline for the past three months, the farm price on April 15 was higher than for the same month a year ago for the first time since December, 1925. Hay was also higher than a year ago, while potato prices were \$2.70 per bushel as compared with \$0.70 on April 15, 1925. Other important farm crops were lower in price than a year ago.

A substantial increase in the farm prices of both veal calves and milk cows between April, 1925, and April, 1926, suggests the possibility that the present price of butter and milk is increasing the demand for milk cows, and may in turn lead to an increase in the number of heifer calves being raised this spring.

PRICE INDEXES FOR MARCH, 1926.

Farm products figures from this Bureau; commodity groups from Bureau of Labor Statistics, (latter shown to nearest whole number.) Shows year ago, and latest available month:

Farm Products

(Prices at the farm, Aug. 1909 - July 1914 = 100.)

	Mar. <u>1925</u>	Feb. <u>1926</u>	Mar. <u>1926</u>	Month <u>Trend</u>
Cotton	198	143	133	Lower
Corn	175	107	104	Lower
Wheat	186	176	165	Lower
Hay	104	109	109	Unchanged
Potatoes	102	324	324	Unchanged
Beef cattle	119	124	128	Higher
Hogs	163	162	161	Lower
Eggs	111	134	112	Lower
Butter	155	167	164	Lower
Wool	242	212	195	Lower

Commodity Groups

(Wholesale Prices; 1910-1914 = 100.) 1/

	Mar. <u>1925</u>	Feb. <u>1926</u>	Mar. <u>1926</u>	Month <u>Trend</u>
Farm products	161	150	144	Lower
Food, etc.	158	152	150	Lower
Cloths & clothing	194	188	184	Lower
Fuel & lighting	202	208	203	Lower
Metal & met. products	143	138	137	Lower
Bldg. materials	185	182	181	Lower
Chemicals, etc.	133	131	130	Lower
House-furnishing goods	176	170	170	Unchanged
<u>ALL COMMODITIES</u>	164	158	154	Lower

1/ Bureau of Labor Statistics index numbers converted to 1910-1914 base.

RELATIVE PURCHASING POWER

(At March 1926 Farm Prices)

Aug. 1909 - July, 1914 = 100

Of a Unit of:

<u>In terms of:</u>	<u>Cotton</u>	<u>Corn</u>	<u>Wheat</u>	<u>Hay</u>	<u>Potatoes</u>
All commodities	86	67	107	71	210
Cloths, etc.	72	56	90	59	176
Fuel, etc.	66	51	81	54	159
Metals, etc.	97	76	121	80	236
Bldg. Materials	74	57	91	60	179
House-furnishing goods	79	61	97	64	191

	<u>Beef Cattle</u>	<u>Hogs</u>	<u>Eggs</u>	<u>Butter</u>	<u>Wool</u>
All commodities	83	104	73	106	126
Cloths, etc.	70	87	61	89	106
Fuel, etc.	63	79	55	81	96
Metals, etc	93	118	82	119	142
Bldg. materials	71	89	62	90	108
House-furnishing goods	75	95	66	96	115

Perhaps the most significant changes in unit purchasing power of important crops during March were the declines in cotton and wheat and the increase in cattle. None of the changes were more than 4 or 5 points, but they reflect the trend in the current exchange position of these respective products.

The general index of purchasing power of farm products, in terms of non-agricultural commodities, continued at 87, at which point it has now stood for 6 months.

GENERAL BUSINESS INDICATORS
RELATED TO AGRICULTURE

	1925 <u>Mar.</u>	1926 <u>Feb.</u>	1926 <u>Mar.</u>	Month's <u>Trend</u>
<u>PRODUCTION</u>				
Pig iron daily (Thou. tons)	115	104	111	Increase
Bituminous coal (Millions tons)	38	47	46	Decrease
Automobiles shipped (Thou. carloads)	56	61	73	Increase
<u>CONSUMPTION</u>				
Cotton by mills (Thou. bales)	583	567	635	Increase
Unfilled orders Steel Corp. (Thou. T.)	4,864	4,617	4,380	Decrease
Building contracts (Millions dollars)	386	288	490	Increase
Hogs slaughtered (Thousands)	2,285	2,035	2,144	Increase
Cattle " "	1,179	1,013	1,221	Increase
Sheep " "	836	863	1,001	Increase
<u>MOVEMENTS</u>				
Bank clearings (N.Y.) (Billions dollars)	23	21	28	Increase
Car loadings (Thousands)	3,702	3,676	3,877	Increase
Mail order sales (Millions dollars)	36	36	40	Increase
Men employed, N. Y. State Factories (Thou.)	511	515	517	Increase
Av. price 25 indus. stocks (Dollars)	137	180	158	Decrease
Interest rate (4-6 mo. paper, N. Y.)	3.94	4.13	4.25	Increase
Retail Food Price Index (Dept. Labor)*	151	162	160	Lower
Wholesale Price Index (Dept. Labor)*	161	155	152	Lower

The most spectacular development lately has been in the stock market where sharp declines in prices have had the effect of somewhat unsettling confidence all along the line. The lowering of the rediscount rate by the New York Federal Reserve Bank, however, has tended to ease the situation, though with what ultimate effect remains to be seen. Various other developments such as the textile labor difficulties, the slackening here and there in building operations, the falling trend of prices, raise questions as to the probable state of business by next winter. However, the general, current situation continues one of industrial activity and prosperity.

Cotton men are beginning to keep a careful eye on the possibilities of curtailment by mills. The whole situation is now such as to bear watching by farmers whose products might be affected by change in industrial conditions.

GENERAL TREND OF WAGES AND PRICES

1910-1914 =100

<u>Year and Month</u>	<u>General Wage Level</u>	<u>Farm Wages 2/</u>	<u>Retail Price of Food 1/</u>	<u>Wholesale Price of Food 1/</u>	<u>Wholesale Price All Commodities</u>
	N.Y. factory workers				Bureau of Labor Statistics
1910	---	97	96	100	103
1911	---	97	95	96	95
1912	---	101	101	103	101
1913	---	104	103	99	102
1914(June)	100	101	106	101	100
1915	101	102	104	104	103
1916	114	112	117	120	129
1917	129	140	151	166	180
1918	160	176	174	187	198
1919	185	206	192	205	210
1920	222	239	210	218	230
1921	203	150	158	143	150
1922	197	146	146	137	152
1923	214	166	151	143	156
1924	218	166	150	143	152
1925	223	---	160	156	162
<u>1925</u>					
January	223	156	159	159	163
February	220	---	156	156	164
March	224	---	156	158	164
April	218	163	155	153	159
May	221	---	156	152	158
June	220	---	160	154	160
July	220	170	165	156	163
August	222	---	165	158	163
September	223	---	164	159	163
October	225	173	167	157	160
November	226	---	172	159	160
December	229	---	171	156	159
<u>1926</u>					
January	229	160	169	155	159
February	225	---	166	152	158
March	229	---	165	150	154

1/ Bureau of Labor Statistics index numbers converted to 1910-1914 base.

2/ Index based on both monthly and daily wages.

NEW INDEX OF GENERAL TREND OF PRICES
On Five-Year Base, August, 1909 - July, 1914 = 100

Year and Month	Index numbers of farm prices							Wholesale Prices of Non-Agricultural Commodities 1/	Relative purchasing power of Farmer's Product 2/
	Grains	Fruits and Vegetables	Meat Animals	Dairy & Poultry Products	Cotton and Cotton-seed	Unclassified	All Groups 30 Items		
1910	104	91	103	101	113	102	103	102	101
1911	96	106	87	95	101	103	95	96	99
1912	106	110	95	103	87	106	99	100	99
1913	92	92	108	100	97	94	100	105	95
1914	103	100	112	101	85	95	102	97	105
1915	120	83	104	99	78	95	100	101	99
1916	126	123	120	106	119	100	117	138	85
1917	217	202	173	133	187	130	176	182	97
1918	226	162	202	160	245	157	200	188	107
1919	231	189	206	182	247	162	209	199	105
1920	231	249	173	197	248	152	205	241	85
1921	112	148	108	151	101	90	116	167	69
1922	105	152	113	135	156	94	124	168	74
1923	114	136	106	147	216	109	135	171	79
1924	129	124	109	137	211	100	134	162	83
1925	156	160	139	143	177	92	147	165	89
1925									
Jan.	172	122	123	154	182	94	146	165	88
Feb.	178	131	126	142	183	96	146	167	88
Mar.	172	138	145	134	195	94	151	165	91
Apr.	152	146	146	131	189	94	147	162	90
May	159	162	139	132	184	87	146	161	90
June	164	184	139	132	183	86	148	163	91
July	152	178	148	134	186	88	149	164	91
Aug.	157	178	149	139	186	96	152	164	93
Sept.	148	142	143	141	178	90	144	163	88
Oct.	135	152	141	154	171	90	143	164	87
Nov.	138	194	136	162	144	95	144	166	87
Dec.	140	194	136	163	139	92	143	165	87
1926									
Jan.	143	214	140	153	138	87	143	165	87
Feb.	140	218	146	144	142	87	143	164	87
Mar.	133	220	147	137	133	85	140	162	87

1/ Computed by Bureau of Labor Statistics from wholesale prices of all commodities except those from United States farms. 1910-1914 = 100. 2/ The value of a unit of the farmer's product in exchange for non-agricultural products at wholesale prices, compared with pre-war values. Obtained by dividing index of all groups (30 items) by index of wholesale prices of non-agricultural products.

THE TREND OF MOVEMENT TO MARKET

Figures show wheat, corn, hogs, cattle, sheep receipts at primary markets; butter receipts at five markets, compiled by this Bureau. All figures given to nearest thousand, that is, three ciphers omitted:

Month	WHEAT Receipts Th. bu.	CORN Receipts Th. bu.	HOGS Receipts Thousands	CATTLE Receipts Thousands	SHEEP Receipts Thousands	BUTTER Receipts Th. lbs.
1920 Total	332,314	210,332	42,121	22,197	23,538	402,755
1921 "	435,606	340,908	41,101	19,787	24,168	468,150
1922 "	413,106	378,598	44,068	23,218	22,364	526,714
1923 "	386,430	271,858	55,330	23,211	22,025	545,380
1924 "	482,007	278,719	55,414	23,695	22,201	587,477
1925 "	346,381	223,604	43,929	24,067	22,100	574,489
1920 Mar.	16,383	22,510	3,940	1,662	1,315	29,241
1921 "	20,927	32,514	3,386	1,566	1,750	29,107
1922 "	19,047	33,930	3,411	1,622	1,465	37,468
1923 "	22,081	24,710	4,928	1,502	1,430	41,281
1924 "	17,434	29,405	4,833	1,556	1,367	44,082
1925 Jan.	23,247	35,820	6,105	1,869	1,467	37,781
" Feb.	18,493	20,833	4,558	1,530	1,388	35,181
" Mar.	16,925	23,868	3,528	1,860	1,504	40,725
" Apr.	10,023	9,810	3,247	1,827	1,541	42,141
" May	17,896	11,935	3,283	1,737	1,689	56,838
" June	20,465	17,381	3,507	1,746	1,603	74,171
" July	37,919	9,662	2,798	1,970	1,699	69,970
" Aug.	41,928	17,488	2,549	2,245	2,064	57,556
" Sept.	57,756	12,889	2,741	2,157	2,627	45,005
" Oct.	34,111	12,187	3,390	2,789	3,198	43,467
" Nov.	33,948	19,144	3,844	2,282	1,712	35,455
" Dec.	33,670	32,587	4,380	2,056	1,608	36,199
1926 Jan.	19,076	28,268	4,304	1,840	1,548	39,424
" Feb.	15,923	25,718	3,372	1,551	1,486	39,507
" Mar.	15,052	20,080	3,579	1,811	1,695	46,077

Grain movement low during March, compared with previous month or March of recent years.

Hog movement practically same as in March a year ago, though showed an increase over February. Cattle movement continues like last spring. Sheep receipts growing heavier.

Butter receipts relatively heavy.

THE TREND OF EXPORT MOVEMENT

Compiled from Department of Commerce reports by Division of Statistical Research of this Bureau.

Month	WHEAT ^{1/} including flour	TOBACCO (Leaf)	BACON** HAMS AND SHOULDERS	LARD	TOTAL* MEATS	COTTON# running bales
	1,000 Bushels	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Bales
1920 Total	311,601	467,662	821,922	612,250	1,043,500	6,111
1921 "	359,021	515,353	647,680	868,942	786,280	6,385
1922 "	235,307	430,908	631,452	766,950	733,832	6,015
1923 "	175,190	474,500	828,890	1,035,382	958,472	5,224
1924 "	241,454	546,555	637,980	944,095	729,832	6,653
1925 "	138,786	468,469	467,459	688,829	547,361	8,362
1920 March	17,323	45,411	106,091	69,430	121,886	790
1921 "	21,039	45,445	54,452	82,617	63,091	368
1922 "	14,673	32,967	54,763	64,377	62,231	452
1923 "	11,011	31,688	66,441	109,187	75,934	310
1924 "	9,659	61,172	66,695	100,726	74,464	315
1925 January	13,126	35,448	56,169	78,440	55,705	1,052
" February	11,800	23,806	48,041	60,363	55,438	792
" March	16,480	32,477	53,853	63,281	62,158	708
" April	12,912	30,519	33,413	44,447	39,303	440
" May	13,114	22,415	33,475	71,135	38,977	314
" June	10,922	27,460	39,690	59,799	45,398	211
" July	8,932	39,037	35,472	49,414	40,990	198
" August	12,007	34,890	31,770	45,740	38,250	313
" September	13,152	50,677	32,900	62,646	40,230	750
" October	9,113	52,211	30,706	44,745	37,071	1,414
" November	8,796	51,154	31,693	39,979	37,304	1,196
" December	8,437	68,375	40,277	68,840	46,537	974
1926 January	5,587	46,891	46,654	76,670	53,833	735
" February	4,742	47,147	37,187	65,356	45,292	545
" March	7,039	36,167	34,133	64,259	40,641	512

* Includes fresh, canned and pickled beef, bacon, hams and shoulders; fresh, canned, and pickled pork; fresh mutton and lamb.

** Includes Cumberland and Wiltshire sides.

Excludes linters.

^{1/} Wheat flour is converted on a basis of 4.7 bushels grain equal 1 barrel flour.

COLD STORAGE SITUATION

April 1 holdings (Shows nearest million, six figures omitted):

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>5-Year Average</u>	<u>Year Ago</u>	<u>Month Ago</u>	<u>April 1, 1926.</u>
Creamery butter, lbs.	9	11	26	17
American cheese, lbs	19	28	43	38
Case eggs, cases	1,030*	1,240*	77*	857*
Total poultry, lbs.	82	109	95	73
Total beef, lbs.	102	116	78	72
Total pork, lbs	812	830	610	627
Lard, lbs.	103	150	76	93
Lamb & mutton, lbs.	10,368*	2,090*	3,346*	3,282*
Total meats, lbs.	1,001	1,042	746	755

Dairy products continued a seasonal out-of-storage movement during March while eggs began a fairly heavy movement into storage. April 1 stocks of eggs, however, were 30 per cent below a year ago.

Beef stocks declined slightly further during the month while pork increased slightly.

Stocks of eggs and meats below average. Stocks of dairy products above average.

* Thousands, or three figures, omitted.

THE DAIRY SITUATION

That season of the year is again at hand when the development of perhaps greatest importance to dairy interests is the probable production trend during the months immediately ahead. April passes with all of the major manufactured products still maintaining the good sized lead over 1925 production which has featured previous months this year, the increase being apparently about 10 per cent. In view of conditions mentioned below, this change is somewhat significant, for while these conditions can hardly be held as necessarily exerting a depressing influence, they are not such as to lend a great deal of stimulus to production.

First of all, the dairy price situation is less favorable than last year. Butter prices early in the month were temporarily steadied, but on the whole they have followed a decided downward trend since the first of March. Not since October has a price prevailed as low as that reached the middle of April, the wholesale price at New York touching 38¢ at that time. Cheese prices are also lower. Milk prices, both in condensery and in city milk producing districts, have not shared equally in this downward trend, although in many instances, producers prices have been lowered.

In addition to price changes, the statistical position of dairy markets is another factor which, in view of the heavy current production, is being watched closely by dairy interests, particularly that group which assumes the risk of storing. Despite a fairly good sized out-of-storage movement in March, there still remained in cold storage warehouses on April 1 some 17,000,000 pounds of butter, a surplus of 7,000,000 pounds over April 1, 1925. Since April 1 the further reduction of storage stocks has been very slow, indicating that current trade demand has not been sufficient to absorb even a moderate amount of butter from storage in addition to current receipts. Likewise, cheese in storage is also greater in amount than a year ago. Even condensed milk stocks did not show the reduction during March which might be expected from a study of several years past.

As a final feature of the situation, dairy exports have assumed a place of relative unimportance. Butter exports have amounted to only about half a million pounds each of the months this year, and cheese exports are even less. Canned milk constitutes the bulk of foreign trade, but this business is almost entirely limited to regular outlets. A light export movement is, of course, offset by a negligible import movement, except on cheese, which, however, is of foreign types.

From the foregoing, it may be said that while the dairy situation is not yielding fully to influences which may be considered somewhat unfavorable, the approach of the new season finds conditions which might be better. All of which means, probably, that dairy trends may be more than usually dependent upon what happens in other lines of business. It may be said also, however, that despite a situation which is a bit unusual, there still continues the feeling of optimism which has been a feature throughout all of 1926.

L. M. DAVIS,

Division of Dairy & Poultry Products, B.A.E.

DAIRY SITUATION
(Thousand lbs., i.e., 000 omitted)
BUTTER SUMMARY

	MARCH			JANUARY TO MARCH INCL.		
	1926	1925	% Change	1926	1925	% Change
Production (1)						
Creamery	94,842	84,005	+ 12.9	267,516	244,291	+ 9.5
Farm	39,150	39,825	- 1.7	107,474	109,327	- 1.7
Net imports	298 Ex.	1,316	--	1,873	1,369	--
In storage (1st)	26,313	28,789	- 8.6	52,785	65,694	- 19.7
In storage (end)	17,390	10,875	+ 59.9	17,390	10,875	+ 59.9
Trade output	142,617	143,060	- 0.3	412,258	409,806	+ 0.6
Milk equivalent	2,994,957	3,004,260	- 0.3	8,657,418	8,605,926	+ 0.6
Receipts 4 mkts (Gross)	52,299	46,319	+ 12.9	142,394	129,008	+ 10.4

CHEESE SUMMARY

Production (2)	32,490	27,346	+ 18.8	83,249	73,748	+ 13.0
Net imports	4,209	2,270	--	11,454	8,152	--
In storage (1st)	58,175	50,117	+ 16.1	76,649	67,558	+ 13.5
In storage (end)	51,096	40,480	+ 26.2	51,096	40,480	+ 26.2
Trade output	43,778	39,253	+ 11.5	120,256	108,978	+ 10.3
Milk equivalent	437,780	392,530	+ 11.5	1,202,560	1,089,780	+ 10.3
Receipts Wisconsin warehouses	20,961	17,635	+ 18.8	53,584	47,423	+ 13.0

CONDENSED AND EVAPORATED MILK SUMMARY

Production (3)	127,516	119,246	+ 6.9	329,355	302,120	+ 9.0
Net exports	11,063	8,245	--	29,081	26,408	--
In Mfgs' hands (1st)	118,346	90,869	+ 30.2	156,190	123,428	+ 26.5
In Mfgs' hands (end)	115,180	110,565	+ 4.2	115,180	110,565	+ 4.2
Trade output	119,619	91,305	+ 31.0	341,284	288,575	+ 18.3
Milk equivalent	299,047	228,262	+ 31.0	853,210	721,437	+ 18.3

TOTAL MILK EQUIVALENT - BUTTER, CHEESE AND CONDENSED MILK

Production	3,457,522	3,172,005	+ 9.0	9,530,667	8,918,758	+ 6.9
Trade output	3,731,784	3,625,052	+ 2.9	10,713,188	10,417,143	+ 2.8

Bulk only

STOCKS OF DRY MILK

Skim milk/(Stocks Apr.1)	4,280	4,268	--	1/1/26	4,399	1/1/25	6,735
Dry milk (Net)	88 Im.	250 Ex.	--		343 Im.	660 Ex.	--

- (1) Estimated from Receipts on 4 principal markets.
 (2) Estimated from Receipts at Wisconsin Warehouses.
 (3) Compiled from special reports of this Bureau.

THE EGG AND POULTRY SITUATION

Receipts of eggs at the four markets, while increasing with the advance of the season, continue light compared with a year ago. The unfavorable spring weather, which has hampered production and collections, is generally believed to be at least partly responsible for this condition. Early this year receipts were running well ahead of last, but a shortage of 100,000 cases in March followed by an average weekly shortage of more than 100,000 cases in April has resulted at the end of the month in total receipts since January 1 being about 400,000 cases less than the previous year's figures.

In spite of a falling off in demand following Easter and the Jewish holidays, the comparatively light receipts have kept the market well sustained. Prices have worked upward a little during the month and are now at a slightly higher level than in 1925.

Storage operations are proceeding rather cautiously. With last year's disastrous season and the heavy winter receipts of Pacific Coast eggs still fresh in mind, many operators are reluctant to store believing that present costs are too high. Storage stocks on April 1 were about 30 per cent less than in 1925, but were greater than the stocks of either 1924 or 1923. Should receipts show a heavy increase in the near future, with the advent of more favorable weather, and prices decline as a consequence, there is still time for storage holdings to approach or to catch up with those of last year. Exports to the Argentine continue and will probably amount to around 60,000 cases during April.

The dressed poultry market is firm and in a generally satisfactory condition. Prices are relatively high which has resulted in the demand being only moderate. Receipts, however, have not been burdensome, and clearance of the fresh arrivals has been quite good. Stocks of frozen poultry are much lighter than a year ago and the out-of-storage movement continues fairly satisfactory. Fowl prices have tended upward owing to the scarcity of frozen stock and to moderate arrivals of fresh. Heavy fowl, however, are not moving as well as the smaller sizes.

The live poultry market has been somewhat irregular in trend with alternating short periods of firmness and easiness. Receipts of chicken have fallen off sharply as is usual at this time of year. Early broilers, however, are beginning to arrive more freely with prices declining. Heavy fowl are in slow demand and inclined to be weak.

Rob R. Slocum,

Division of Dairy & Poultry Products, B.A.E.

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POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION.
(Thousands, i.e. 000 omitted)
Stocks in Storage - April 1, 1926, - United States

	Shell eggs (Cases)	Frozen eggs (Pounds)	Dressed poultry (Pounds)
1926	857	21,844	73,013
1925	1,240	11,353	108,608
Change	- 383	+ 10,491	- 35,595
Per cent	- 30.9	+ 92.4	- 32.8
% change from 5-yr. av.	- 16.8	+ 48.1	- 11.0

Imports and Exports of Poultry and Eggs. - Jan. 1 - Mar. 31, 1926.

	Imports	1926	1925	Exports	1926	1925
Shell eggs (dozens)		68	373		9,110	5,783
Whole egg, dried (Lbs.)		80	201		--	--
Whole egg, frozen (Lbs.)		798	1,720		--	--
Yolks, dried (Lbs.)		721	200	(1)	115	(1) 22
Yolks, frozen (Lbs.)		668	511		--	--
Egg albumen, dried (Lbs.)		582	334		--	--
Egg albumen, frozen, prepared or preserved (Lbs.)		621	118		--	--
Live poultry, (Lbs.)		154	48		178	171
Dressed poultry, (Lbs.)		1,514	645	(2)	1,053	(2) 2,629
Poultry prepared in any manner (Lbs.)		201	219		--	--

(1) Includes all forms of frozen & dried eggs. (2) Includes game.

Receipts and Apparent Trade Output at Four Markets - Eggs (Cases)

	Receipts	March Net storage Movement	App. trade Output	Receipts	Jan. 1 - Mar. 31 Net storage Movement	App. trade Output
1926	1,667	+ 128	1,539	3,538	- 703	4,241
1925	1,769	+ 308	1,461	3,464	- 342	3,806
Change	- 102		+ 78	+ 74		+ 435
Per cent	- 5.8		+ 5.3	+ 2.1		+ 11.4

Receipts and Apparent Trade Output at Four Markets - Dressed Poultry (Lbs.)

	Receipts	March Net storage Movement	App. trade output	Receipts	Jan. 1 - Mar. 31 Net storage Movement	App. trade output
1926	17,343	- 14,228	31,571	62,041	- 22,829	84,870
1925	15,048	- 14,601	29,649	62,016	- 16,097	78,113
Change	+ 2,295		+ 1,922	+ 25		+ 6,757
Per cent	+ 15.3		+ 6.5	+ .04		+ 8.7

THE POTATO SITUATION

When prices slumped the last half of April, potato markets slowed down with sudden jolts and jars. Buyers, as well as sellers, did but little for awhile. They were waiting for the next turn of events, and shipments decreased abruptly. Then followed gradual clearance of the heavy supplies on hand and some improvement in the market tone.

The underlying position continued strong. New potatoes were still in light supply and selling at about two-thirds the season's opening price. Old potato stocks were fast decreasing. Probably the shipments for the 2 months remaining will exceed those in the late spring of 1917 and of 1920, when only 3,000 to 4,000 carloads moved during May and June. Maine, usually the most persistent late shipper, has 3,500 to 4,000 carloads available, according to local estimates. Half a dozen other States still have old potatoes in considerable quantity.

In recent seasons of potato shortage, some markets averaged highest prices in April, others in May, and prices have stayed rather high in June. Potato prices in such seasons did not go very low again until August, sometimes not until September, depending on the output of the mid-season crop. This spring the very early crop was a little short. The May and June crop from the Carolinas and Virginia is late in maturing, but about average in condition in late April and likely to be about as large as usual, with some carry-over into mid-season, when the crop in New Jersey and the early part of the crop in Missouri, Maine, Minnesota, Idaho and Long Island come to market. But with intended light plantings in New Jersey, it may be that the supply will prove moderate all summer and the price stay fairly high until September, as happened in 1920. Crop conditions will decide that point unless the mid-season region, like the South, has changed its early plans and planted more acres. Among the developments to be watched will be the probable yield in Virginia and the actual acreage in New Jersey.

If potato market history repeats itself, the early crop will be eagerly sought after and its distribution more widespread than in ordinary years. Market prospects would be good for the early crops, and fair for the mid-season output, but more doubtful for the main crop unless the late acreage is held down or the yield is light. In the potato territory - early, medium and late together, the prospect of overplanting appears less threatening than usual after a year of high prices. The great danger would lie in a general change from the cautious plans of early spring.

G. B. Fiske,

Division of Fruits and Vegetables, B. A. E.

APPLE AND TRUCK CROP SITUATION

Apple holders, who are mostly dealers at this season, have not quite given up hope of a late spring rise. They point out some tendency to price recovery here and there in domestic and foreign markets. Western apples have been keeping rather better than eastern, and apparently most of the poorly keeping stock has been closed out. Supplies continue liberal for the time of year. Holdings are heavier than last year, but lighter than two years ago. Usually about 2,000 carloads move in May and June.

The downward trend of many farm products has been shared by fruits and vegetables. Even potatoes lost 10 per cent of the rise which had taken them to the year's highest points. The seasonal increase in the supply partly explains the general course of the vegetable markets, yet the season is late compared with last spring and the April carlot output was moderate in quantity. This comparative lateness means that various producing sections which sometimes get to market in April will be competing actively with the usual May shipments, probably at some sacrifice in price, unless, as now seems possible, the May shipping sections are late too. Even since recent declines, many vegetables have been selling higher than a year ago; - 10 to 25 per cent higher at times for new potatoes and onions, celery, cabbage, lettuce, beans and various other early specialties. Light production of tomatoes, peppers, peas and beans has been offset by an increase of one-half in carlots imported from Mexico and the West Indies.

Tomato planting may increase somewhat in the mid-season sections, despite the reported intention of many canners to reduce the output and to cut the price paid for tomatoes. Last year nearly 10 per cent of the tomato supply was imported, mostly early in the season. Probably the percentage will be greater this year, owing to heavy early increase.

Cantaloupe acreage and reported plans show heavy gains to come in southern California, but decreases in most other sections leave the net acreage, actual and intended, only 4 or 5 per cent above last year, but the heaviest since 1922. Watermelon planters talk of increase in nearly every region, planning the greatest acreage in four years.

The condition of most crops is about average. Wet weather and the late April frosts caused some damage to the more tender truck crops and increased the general lateness of the season.

G. B. Fiske,
Division of Fruits and Vegetables, B. A. E.

CONDITIONS IN-COLORADO

In general, the middle of April finds Colorado with fair to excellent moisture conditions except in the extreme northeast, east, and small portions of the southwest. As reported by the Weather Bureau, only 6 times in 39 years has the month of March averaged more precipitation than this year.

The precipitation thus far during the month of April has been light, and most sections are needing rain to supply surface moisture to bring up crops. The northeast and east, however, are exceedingly dry, and winter wheat is suffering for lack of moisture, and moisture is also needed in these sections to prepare the ground for spring crops. With the precipitation during March, the snowfall in elevated regions is generally above normal with a considerably higher percentage above last year.

Winter wheat is mostly doing well except in the areas indicated as needing moisture. Farm operations are farther advanced than usual for this time of year. Spring grains are mostly planted, and sugar beets are coming up in localities, particularly in the north central.

All livestock came through the winter in excellent condition. Feed supplies are usually abundant and above normal, considerable surplus will be held over. Prices of all feeds have declined and are generally reasonable. Nearly all desirable farms are being operated, either by owners or tenants. Farm machinery is in better demand than last year. Farmers are more hopeful than a year ago and usually in better financial condition. They have been able to pay off some indebtedness and expand slightly in their farm operations. Most of the increased income has been due to highly satisfactory prices for certain special crops such as wheat, potatoes, cabbage, and onions. The producer has received somewhat better prices for cattle and hogs and received high prices for the sheep and lambs sold to the feeders.

The sheep feeder deal has been exceedingly disappointing and has lost the feeders from \$1 to \$3.50 per head, probably an average of \$2.00 per head or more. This means a total loss to the sheep feeders in the State of approximately \$2,500,000. The cattle feeders also are not making much money and many of them not playing even. With the feeding operations showing such unfavorable results and decided losses, money for other farm operations has become less plentiful and to this extent is affecting the entire farm situation of the State.

Potatoes are selling at high prices, ranging around \$4.50 to \$4.75 per hundred pounds. Most of the crop, however, is sold so that growers generally are not benefiting greatly by these high prices.

Prospects thus far are favorable for a good fruit crop this season.

There has been some damage to wheat and rye from high winds, especially in the eastern and northeastern portions of the State, but usually farm conditions are much better than a year ago.

W. W. Putnam,
State Statistician, B. A. E.

CONDITIONS IN TEXAS

The optimism which prevailed over most of the farming region early in the month has been considerably dampened by the excessive rains lately. Besides delaying the planting of cotton and other crops, much replanting has become necessary as a result of the wet condition of the soil and the washing by beating rains. Some of the streams were out of their banks and roads not hard-surfaced were very heavy. Most of the plowing has been done, so when the weather clears again and the soil dries sufficiently it will not take long before all spring crops will be planted.

In south Texas probably three-fourths of the cotton crop has been planted and small percentages in the other districts. Some fields are coming up thick with grass and weeds and few cultivators are able to work. Corn, forage and hay crops planted early are making progress. Sowing of the rice crop has been greatly delayed, only a few thousand acres of early crop having been seeded before the rains interfered. Fall oats are heading out well and the other small grains will go forward rapidly when the weather clears.

New potatoes, onions, strawberries and green beans are being shipped in carlots. The spring movement of cattle to grass in Oklahoma and Kansas is in full swing. Pastures are excellent, and all stock is in good condition. Sheep shearing is now at its peak. Interest in cattle and swine is high owing to the relatively good prices they command.

The next few weeks are of great importance to agriculture and business in the State. With favorable weather conditions much of the lateness of the season can be overcome. If rains continue, however, we may look for a gradual slowing down of business in many lines. The fuel business has entered upon its seasonal depression and the loading of timber, sand, gravel and stone has been affected by road conditions. Except in the small grain sections, sales of farm implements show a falling off. The wholesale trade is mainly in the line of staples, and collections are somewhat slow. Country banks continue to draw on their city connections and the Federal Reserve Bank. In the cities construction activities show no decline, and labor is plentiful.

H. H. Schutz,
State Statistician, B. A. E.